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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Forty-eighth session

UNHCR INSPECTION AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The past year has been primarily a period of consolidation for the Inspection and Evaluation Service. Procedures and methods developed in early 1996 were finalized, tested, improved and integrated with oversight work. In another parallel process, the newly established inspection function has gradually gained broad acceptance throughout the Office.

2. Project Delphi, in addition to the expected mainstreaming of the new oversight activities in UNHCR, has given a specific momentum to the consolidation of the Inspection and Evaluation Service activities. A number of initiatives have been responded to by the Service; these have included the development of a strategy for Inspection and Evaluation; the introduction of a new structure for the Service; the strengthening of the monitoring of implementation of inspection and evaluation recommendations; the improvement of the overall evaluation capacity in UNHCR and the establishment of an Oversight Committee in the Office. The development of a Career Management System has been another opportunity for the Inspection and Evaluation Service to reflect upon and formulate comprehensive sets of objectives.

3. In its broadest expression, an internal oversight service will contribute to improvement in the management and implementation of UNHCR operations and activities through an expanded range of coordinated oversight and follow-up mechanisms. Furthermore, it will ensure that in a more decentralized organizational environment featuring increased delegation to the field, commensurably higher levels of accountability are in force. Finally, it will provide the High Commissioner with independent management advice.

4. With the ever-growing concern for effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of humanitarian programmes, the demand for oversight activities is

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bound to increase sharply within the short-term. This in turn will translate into rising pressure on the inspection and evaluation capacity of the Office. Despite ambitious objectives, the impact of the work of the Inspection and Evaluation Service will be inevitably proportional to the resources it has available.

II. INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

5. During the past year, inspection missions have continued to be dispatched to various parts of the world including Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Central Europe. Recommendations were formulated and their implementation followed-up in accordance with now established inspection procedures. The Standing Committee was periodically informed of inspection activities through the various updates on regional developments.

6. With more than fifty countries visited since its inception, the Inspection and Evaluation Service has now at its disposal a considerable amount of useful information. One of the major activities of the Service during the last reporting period was to analyse the data collected in order to draw lessons applicable to future programmes. Moreover, information was also analysed to evaluate the impact of the inspection exercises on operations and to adjust procedures and methodologies to various oversight needs.

7. Lessons learnt related to programme and operations management were compiled last spring from finalized inspections reports. In addition to its general monitoring purpose, the exercise provided an input for the ongoing design of the new organization-wide Operations Management System. A number of observations, which have appeared most frequently and which have a broad geographical distribution, indicate areas in need of particular attention.

8. For example, inspection teams often noted that within operational situations, "plans of action" to include short and medium-term objectives and tasks could be more systematically developed. Furthermore, it was felt that in some regions a clearer overall strategy could be designed and formulated.

9. With respect to project and operations management, a number of observations pertaining to improved accountability recurred with some regularity. These include the need to close projects promptly, to effect financial transfers to implementing partners on schedule, to ensure the submission of reports and financial statements by partners, and to ensure adequate maintenance of project accounts and supporting documents and the fulfillment of all audit requirements. Periodic reviews of implementing agencies are another means to improve accountability.

10. In some country operations, as well as in several regional situations, contingency plans would need to be developed or updated. While implementing partners are generally associated with such activities, participatory approaches may at times suffer from the pressure of late planning as well as from rapidly developing situations.

11. More could often be done also with regard to the field offices' knowledge of the operational environment. Socio-demographic data could be widely collected. Generic databases and refugee registration systems to facilitate regional caseload approaches could be developed.

12. Programmes for urban caseloads, which are particularly resource-intensive, could be regularly analysed and changes in options considered in the pursuit of durable solutions. Case management approaches could be systematically tried out.

13. The interaction between the Inspection and Evaluation Service and global projects such as the Operations Management System, Project Delphi and the Career Management System has facilitated the acceptance of the newly established inspection function. Through the contribution of its field review experience to the debates, the Service has found common ground with its operational counterparts in UNHCR's regional bureaux and desks. As a result, inspection reports and recommendations have been considered more thoroughly and follow-up procedures respected.

14. More recently, the Inspection and Evaluation Service also thoroughly reviewed and analysed recommendations pertaining specifically to administrative and human resources management. The review listed recommendations under the separate headings of general administration, staffing, conditions of service and entitlements, staff security, staff medical arrangements and administrative training and upgrading of management capacity. Among the most frequently encountered problems are:

(i) the need to improve the exchange of information in field offices, including the regular inter-office reporting of staff briefings and meetings;

(ii) the need to consider the applicability of schemes pertaining to the relief of stress and the relief of isolation (MARS/VARI);

(iii) issues regarding the classification of duty stations with regard to actual conditions;

(iv) the inadequacy of remunerations in respect of the actual cost of living at duty stations;

(v) medical facilities and medical evacuation plans;

(vi) excessive delays in filling existing posts, and

(vii) the need for administrative training for staff in field offices.

In future, the Inspection and Evaluation Service will continue to systematically review, categorize and analyse the observations and recommendations produced during every inspection mission. It is hoped that within several years the sum of the Service's observations will thoroughly reflect UNHCR's operational environment.

15. The development of a computerized database, which had already begun during the previous reporting period, and whose capabilities become gradually more apparent to the staff of the Inspection and Evaluation Service, has been in itself a significant catalyst for the analysis of inspection output. In addition, the database gives the inspection function a tool for the development and testing of inspection methodology. Finally, it is expected that the database, when fully operational, will also allow for optimal systematization of the follow-up on inspection recommendations, hence freeing staff resources for work requiring further review and analysis.

16. In the coming year, inspection work will continue systematically covering important operations, as well as lesser ones and situations involving several offices as well as smaller single country offices. Among the proposed inspection locations are the former Yugoslavia, this autumn, and later China and Japan.

III. EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

17. During the past year, evaluation activities have been concentrated mainly on thematic evaluations of some of the issues and concerns UNHCR is attempting to address. It appears, however, that organizational and system changes brought about by the Delphi process are leading to a significant expansion in the scope of UNHCR's evaluation function. As a consequence, new systems will place much greater emphasis on self-evaluations carried out at the situation level.

18. Thematic and self-evaluations are complementary approaches, which strengthen the Office's ability to systematically review all activities. Greater emphasis on self-evaluations will permit UNHCR to build evaluations into each operation in a manner that will greatly expand evaluation coverage and improve programme planning. Thematic evaluations will serve a long-established need for UNHCR to undertake comprehensive analysis of key operational activities and management issues. In recent years, senior managers have increasingly called for thematic evaluations to assist them in making major changes, develop new strategies or simply to better understand and analyse innovative operational approaches.

19. Activities approved by the High Commissioner for the second half of 1996 and early 1997 include:

- Review of capacity-building in central and eastern Europe
- Review of UNHCR's refugee education activities
- Staff stress and security : a management challenge for UNHCR
- Review of UNHCR's implementing arrangements
- Review of UNHCR's phase-out strategies
- Refugee camp security in the Great Lakes region

20. After the evaluation is distributed, the Inspection and Evaluation Service monitors progress in implementing recommendations, as well as stimulates and supports the process, as required. To track follow-up more systematically, evaluation staff use a recently introduced computerized database to monitor and report on follow-up actions.

21. An important role of the evaluation function has been to disseminate lessons that can be incorporated into planning, training, and programme design. Hence, close links are maintained with other organizational components, which provide a means of channelling lessons learnt back into activities. Evaluation conclusions have also been disseminated by distributing reports to staff, who are involved in similar activities or issues throughout the organization, thereby enabling them to draw lessons relevant to their work. New systems such as the internal REFWORLD have continued expanded staff access to evaluation thus further increasing the usefulness and impact of the work.

A. Review of capacity-building in Central and Eastern Europe

22. The evaluation found that after several years of experience in the region, there now seems little doubt that capacity-building activities constitute the most useful and cost-effective means of assisting Governments in the geographically vast and relatively developed area of the Commonwealth Independent States (CIS) and Central Europe. Capacity-building also appears to be the best way in which UNHCR can exert significant influence over asylum laws and practices. Thus, capacity-building was judged a legitimate and essential area of work for UNHCR; most countries considered capacity-building to be the activity which should receive the Office's highest priority.

23. The conclusions and recommendations of the report were welcomed by the Regional Bureau for Europe, and immediate action was taken to implement those recommendations relating to the region in the context of the CIS Conference and its follow-up process. In order to increase the organizational attention given to this important area of activity, a special session of UNHCR's Policy Committee is being organized to consider policy questions and issues related to such activities.

B. Staff stress and security

24. Since the beginning of the decade, humanitarian staff have been increasingly exposed to unacceptable levels of violence in the course of their work. The evaluation acknowledged that UNHCR has made considerable progress in the areas of staff security and stress management and noted the significant contribution the agency has made to United Nations system-wide developments on these two fronts. Nevertheless, it also identified many areas in which UNHCR's existing procedures and practices can be further enhanced to better ensure the security of its staff and to mitigate stress levels.

25. The report calls for UNHCR and its partners to undertake an in-depth joint analysis of security thresholds in order to define minimal conditions for service in future humanitarian operations in situations of emerging or ongoing violence. Particular concern is raised in the report over the security of national staff. The report's recommendations received the full support of the Senior Management Committee, which has charged the Division of Human Resources Management with preparing a plan of action incorporating the recommendations.

C. A review of UNHCR refugee education activities

26. The support for education activities in UNHCR is often thought to have suffered during the financial constraints of the early 1990s and its aftermath. The evaluation concluded that three types of education and their related target groups should be given particular priority: primary education for children, basic education and literacy retention for adolescents and adult literacy. Other types of education, while needed and important, were accorded a lower priority in terms of coverage, due to funding constraints.

27. It is anticipated that the new education policy and guidelines suggested by the review will be adopted. Field offices will be requested to assess their current programmes in the light of the new policy and priorities and to revert to the Division of Operational Support with their plans for implementation.

Technical guidance to assist in implementing new approaches will be provided through technical manuals, planning workshops and, where necessary, direct technical assistance.

D. Review of UNHCR's implementing arrangements

28. The quality of service UNHCR provides to its beneficiaries depends largely upon the effectiveness of its implementing partners. The arrangements adopted also have considerable financial implications. The evaluation recommended a more structured and consultative approach to selecting implementing partners that would include actively seeking out implementing alternatives and assessing them against a well-defined set of selective criteria. A number of other measures were also recommended to improve UNHCR's approach to implementing arrangements. These include modified implementing instruments, regular evaluation of implementing arrangements, establishment of an implementing partner database and increased capacity-building with local agencies.

E. Review of UNHCR's phase-out strategies

29. With more responsibilities in post-repatriation and internal displacement situations, systematic early phase-out of UNHCR programmes has become less appropriate. The study makes a number of general recommendations. It stresses the need for careful definition of objectives and adequate planning. It cautions against piecemeal reintegration activities and recommends the use of comprehensive multi-sectoral programmes. Furthermore, it notes that the hand-over of reintegration activities to a single successor agency cannot be seen as realistic. A hand-over has limited chances of success where an integrated approach to post-conflict activities has been lacking.

F. Refugee camp security in the Great Lakes region

30. Violence and generalized insecurity in and around camps jeopardized humanitarian efforts in the Great Lakes region. As a consequence, UNHCR was requested to negotiate with the Governments of the asylum countries for the provision of security forces and the implementation of measures to restore public order in refugee camps and settlement areas. The review notes that UNHCR was compelled to act while having no control over political processes. This situation led to a compromise, which in future should be avoided.

31. Several major reviews, which form the Inspection and Evaluation Service's initial 1997 evaluation work programme, are currently in progress and include the following subjects:

(i) Adequacy of UNHCR's efforts to protect and assist refugee children and adolescents;
(ii) UNHCR's direct use of staff employed by agencies;
(iii) Mass information activities;
(iv) Land and property issues in repatriation;
(v) Review of assistance to elderly urban refugees.

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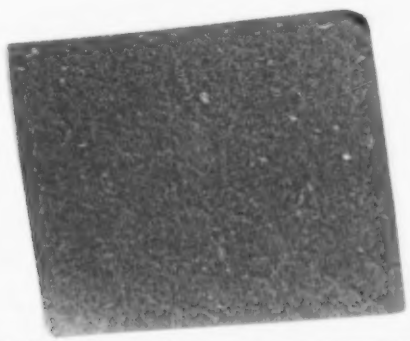
ANNUAL THEME: REPATRIATION CHALLENGES

I. INTRODUCTION

1. While in the period from 1985 to 1990 an estimated 1.2 million refugees returned to their home countries, in the following five years the number rose to 9 million. In 1996 alone, around 2 million refugees repatriated, the principal destinations being Rwanda, Afghanistan, Burundi, Iraq, Togo, Myanmar, Ethiopia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the same year, the Office was assisting some 3.3 million returnees in the early stages of reintegration. Over the past decade, UNHCR has devoted a far greater proportion of its budget to repatriation operations and returnee assistance, with expenditure accounting for at least 14 per cent of total spending since 1991, in contrast to an annual average of below 2 per cent before 1985.

2. Any increased incidence of voluntary repatriation is a positive development. Voluntary repatriation is the preferred solution to refugee problems. Where people are able to reintegrate viably and safely into their countries and communities of origin, repatriation not only benefits returnees themselves, but can also facilitate economic reconstruction and reconciliation in war-torn societies.

3. In recent years, however, the repatriation of refugees and asylum-seekers has increasingly taken place in volatile or unstable environments following, or even during, conflict. Moreover, repatriation has frequently involved various forms of pressure or duress. These range from forcible return to places where the lives of refugees are endangered or where their safety cannot be guaranteed, to flight or evacuation from situations of insecurity in countries of asylum, to return of persons who do not, or are perceived not to require international protection.



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4. In recognition of the complexity of the issues and dilemmas facing UNHCR and the international community, it was decided by the Standing Committee in June 1997 that "Repatriation Challenges" would be the annual theme for the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee. It was further agreed that the Executive Committee debate should be conducted on the basis of work undertaken in the Standing Committee, notably the Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/882), as well as other documentation related to protection aspects of repatriation and return.[1]

5. The present document briefly outlines the challenges and dilemmas experienced in recent instances of repatriation, and examines some of the shortcomings in current UNHCR and multilateral approaches to monitoring and reintegration. Rather than providing policy prescriptions, it seeks to furnish a general framework for the Executive Committee debate which, in turn, will allow the Office to develop further policies and operational approaches.

II. CURRENT REPATRIATION CHALLENGES

A. Repatriation under pressure or duress

6. The scale and character of recent repatriation movements and the fragile nature of the societies to which people return have raised a number of far-reaching protection and assistance challenges. In some cases political, economic or security concerns in countries of refuge have jeopardized asylum. In others, conditions in countries of origin have posed a variety of obstacles to secure, effective and sustainable reintegration. Moreover, cross-border movements have become more diverse and complex in recent years. Refugees in flight from persecution, human rights abuses and conflict, may be mixed with migrants, military personnel, war criminals or others not qualifying for international protection.

7. Despite a well-established international principle that refugee repatriation should take place on a voluntary basis and in conditions of safety and dignity, a large proportion of the world's recent returnees have repatriated under some form of duress, many of them in conditions that were neither fully safe nor dignified. In various parts of the world, pressures to find bilateral solutions to refugee problems have increased. Threats to asylum have multiplied and refugees are viewed increasingly as a burden and a potential threat to national security and stability. In a number of cases, borders have been closed and refugees forcibly returned. This may occur notwithstanding the lack of any fundamental change in conditions which provoked the refugees' original flight, or despite dangerous or insecure conditions prevailing in their homeland.

8. In other situations, return may be triggered by a more general deterioration of conditions in countries of asylum, whether as a result of violence, general instability or reductions in international assistance. In such situations the borderline between voluntariness and compulsion may be difficult to establish in practice. In extreme cases, repatriation emergencies may result when large numbers of refugees feel compelled or are constrained to leave their country of asylum and return to areas of their homelands which are ill-prepared to receive them.

9. Where return takes place under different kinds of pressure or duress, UNHCR may in some cases have no choice but to resort to the best available means of ensuring the safety of those concerned. These may fall short of

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[1] Standing Committee and other relevant documentation is listed in the Annex to this paper.

internationally accepted principles. In recent months, the repatriation challenges faced by UNHCR in the Great Lakes region of Africa have been unprecedented. The return of some 60,000 Rwandan refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo not only posed major operational difficulties, but also gave rise to fundamental dilemmas which reflected the need to chose among options that severely limited the scope for effective protection.

10. By no means all refugees who repatriate to situations of insecurity do so as a result of the kinds of pressures described above. For a variety of reasons, refugees may feel that it is in their best interests to repatriate, even if conditions are not completely safe at home. Afghanistan provides an example of a country to which many refugees have returned despite ongoing conflict. Indeed in situations such as those prevailing in Afghanistan or Bosnia and Herzegovina, where return may be safe in some areas but not in others, a differentiated approach to repatriation may be required.

11. Except where a fundamental change in the situation in the country of origin of refugees has removed the need for international protection, the first challenge for UNHCR and the international community is ensure the availability of safe asylum and to prevent situations of repatriation under pressure or duress. UNHCR's 1997 *Note on International Protection* examines in more detail the challenges faced in safeguarding the institution of asylum and explores a number of fundamental requirements in this respect. These include international solidarity and burden-sharing; effective measures to ensure that refugees are admitted, identified and separated from armed elements; locating camps at a safe distance from borders; and ensuring rapid and secure access by UNHCR and other relevant humanitarian organizations to persons of concern.[2] However, when circumstance in the country of asylum nevertheless oblige refugees to return to insecure situations in their homelands, a different set of challenges emerge. These need to be addressed without detriment to efforts to reinforce the availability of asylum.

- What measures can be taken to ensure that asylum is preserved and international obligations of States to protect refugees are respected?

- What more can be done to offset the impact of refugee populations on countries of asylum?[3]

- How can the security concerns of countries of asylum be more effectively addressed?

- What additional measures can be taken to ensure the physical protection and safety of refugees in countries of asylum?

- How can UNHCR best address the plight of refugees faced with little choice but to return, without undermining the essential principle of *non-refoulement*?

- Under what conditions should UNHCR involve itself in return to situations where effective national protection cannot be fully ensured and when should it not be so involved?

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[2] See *Note on International Protection* (A/AC.96/882) issued to the Standing Committee in June 1997 under the symbol EC/47/SC/CRP.26.

[3] See *Social and Economic Impact of Large Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries* (EC/47/SC/CRP.7) submitted to the January 1997 meeting of the Standing Committee.

B. Repatriation of persons not in need, or no longer in need of international protection

12. While voluntary repatriation to situations where returnees enjoy effective national protection is not controversial and the role of UNHCR is clear, certain dilemmas may, nevertheless, emerge for UNHCR and for States. Conditions in the country of origin may, for example, be conducive to return, but refugees may be reluctant to go home for non-refugee related reasons. In this context there has been renewed discussion of the use of the cessation clauses of the 1951 Convention.[4] Ensuring the return of those no longer in need of international protection is perceived as an important element in maintaining the availability of asylum for those who need it.

13. Similarly, the return of rejected asylum seekers poses problems to many States and their continued presence in receiving countries may also have negative consequences for asylum. Debate has intensified on the extent to which UNHCR can play a useful role, on a "good offices" basis, in assisting Governments to return certain groups of rejected asylum-seekers to their countries of origin.[5]

- What additional measures can be taken to facilitate the return of persons not in need of international protection or who no longer require such protection?

C. Repatriation in the aftermath of conflict

14. Where repatriation is large-scale and particularly when it takes place precipitously or under pressure, it can have a significant impact on the process of peace-building and especially on reconciliation. Effective reintegration is clearly critical for successful peace-building, and in order to avert renewed forced displacement. Yet reintegration requires that a State is willing and able to extend national protection to its citizens. In the aftermath of conflict, this may call for substantial multilateral efforts to promote the reconstruction of economic and social services and resources; rebuild, reform or strengthen political and legal structures; and facilitate reconciliation between war-affected populations.

15. Traditionally, UNHCR's presence and activities in countries of origin have been limited in scope and in time. However, the exploration of new approaches has been necessary where repatriation occurs during internal conflict or in the transition from war to peace, particularly when the fundamental causes of flight have not been resolved.

16. Amongst the harsh realities faced by many returnees are fragile security, the presence of landmines, inadequate judicial processes, threats to governmental authority from rebel groups and the destruction of economic, social and legal infrastructures. Large-scale forced displacement is, moreover, often from politically and economically weak States, where the Government has been unable to protect its citizens from armed conflict or generalized violence. The damage caused by conflict tends to increase the obstacles to national protection, with the state's capacity to protect returnees often weaker in the aftermath of conflict than prior to flight. Special attention thus needs to be given to the ways in which multilateral

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[4] A conference room paper on the cessation clauses (EC/47/SC/CRP.30) was considered by the June 1997 meeting of the Standing Committee.

[5] A conference room paper on the *Return of persons not in need of International Protection* (EC/47/SC/CRP.28) was also considered by the June 1997 meeting of the Standing Committee.

actors can promote effective national protection and help compensate for deficiencies in such protection under highly unstable conditions.

17. The greater the complexity of any actual or potential repatriation, the greater is the need for UNHCR to have a presence on the ground, to have unhindered access to all refugees and returnees, and to have at its disposal the information and resources required for effective and prompt response. Donor Governments have generously supported large-scale, high-profile repatriation operations once they have commenced. Support has been more difficult to secure, however, when preparations for repatriation, albeit tentative and contingent on positive developments in the countries of origin, need to be made against a background of political uncertainty as, for example, in Angola, Eritrea, Liberia and, more recently, Sierra Leone.

- How can repatriation be managed in such a way as to support wider peace-building processes?

- How can preparedness for repatriation operations be best ensured?

D. Reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction

18. A positive aspect of UNHCR's reintegration activities is undoubtedly their focus, through quick impact and other projects, on the "grass roots" level and on returnees and their communities as primary actors in their own reintegration. An emphasis on community level capacity-building and the promotion of indigenous coping mechanisms and individual self-reliance should remain at the core of UNHCR's reintegration efforts.

19. Nevertheless, broader economic, social and legal reconstruction is critical for the effective reintegration of returnees. States emerging from civil conflict require the resources to meet the security and material needs of displaced persons and returnees; rebuild damaged infrastructures and community services; and address the problem of land rendered unusable by landmines and other weapons of war. In the case of weak States, it requires the creation or rebuilding of political institutions, administrative structures and police and judiciary systems.

20. Experience in many recent reintegration operations suggests that current approaches by UNHCR and its multilateral partners may not in themselves be adequate means of achieving successful and sustainable reintegration. UNHCR's "hand-over" of initial rehabilitation projects has not been free from problems. Most rehabilitation activities currently take the form of quick impact projects (QIPs). QIPs were initiated in the early 1990s, in order to fill the gap between relief activities and longer-term development. They represented a stage on the so-called "continuum" from relief to development which foresaw a seamless web of multilateral activities.

21. In practice, this approach has sometimes resulted in a disjuncture between the activities of UNHCR and its partners. UNHCR's initial rehabilitation activities have not always laid the groundwork for sustainable reintegration. In many cases there has been a lack of adequate longer-term planning and needs assessment amongst recipient populations, and a greater focus on inputs than on impact. Even where projects are well-tailored to local needs, local communities, Governments and NGOs may not have access to the necessary resources or skills to sustain projects. Furthermore, QIPS have focused on assistance rather than on the protection needs of returnees.

22. In large-scale repatriation, UNHCR may be obliged to meet the needs of returnee communities with the minimum of delay, making it difficult to

incorporate longer-term considerations into the design and implementation of projects. There is often an inherent tension between speed in response to immediate needs and sustainability. Nonetheless, there may be scope for UNHCR to enhance its contribution to the sustainability of reintegration through improved planning and stronger linkages with key partners. In this context, UNHCR has made efforts to systematize its relations with development and human rights actors. The new Framework for Cooperation concluded with UNDP, collaboration with the World Bank in developing new approaches to post conflict reconstruction and Memoranda of Understanding concluded with Human Rights field operations are examples of action taken in this respect, as are exchanges of letters covering cooperation between UNHCR and the International War Crimes Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

23. Nevertheless, UNHCR's priorities do not always coincide with those of other agencies. While returnees are often the most marginalized groups, development and financial actors may choose to target populations and areas with more development potential, or to channel assistance through central Government rather than local structures and communities. This divergence of priorities is not necessarily negative. The emphasis should be on balancing complementary priorities within a shared framework for policy planning and implementation. In this respect, the emphasis placed by the Secretary-General on the development of a coherent, system-wide United Nations' strategy at the country level is welcomed by UNHCR as an important factor in securing sustainable repatriation solutions.

- How can UNHCR and multilateral agencies better utilize local capacities and resources in the planning and implementation of reconstruction activities?

- What more can be done to increase the involvement of development actors at an early stage of reintegration?

- How can UNHCR further develop and reinforce linkages with other multilateral actors and NGOs to ensure complementarity and an effective division of labour?

- What role should UNHCR play in supporting activities to strengthen state capacity?

- What approach should UNHCR take to the time-frame for its involvement in reintegration activities?

- How can the phase-out of UNHCR and other humanitarian actors be best managed from the point of view of sustainability?

F. Reconciliation

24. Effective reintegration also involves promoting reconciliation between parties to the conflict, or, at the minimum, ensuring their peaceful co-existence and providing a safe environment for people to be able to invest in rebuilding social relations. Reconciliation requires a number of components, including consensus-building on notions of responsibility and justice, with, where appropriate, international tribunals, truth commissions or other mechanisms for implementing justice. It may also involve the promotion of human rights and minority rights through monitoring, legislative reform and education, or more specific interventions to resolve problems relating, for example, to the legal status or property rights of returnees.

25. While UNHCR's protection activities in countries of origin have traditionally been based on the monitoring of guarantees and amnesties, there has, more recently, been an emphasis on monitoring a broader set of human rights depending on specific problems in the country of origin. In this context, UNHCR and other agencies increasingly engaged in activities to strengthen the capacity of central and local government. One important element of this is legal and judicial capacity-building. As the Executive Committee concluded in 1995, "...for States to fulfil their humanitarian responsibilities in ...reintegrating returning refugees, ...an effective human rights regime is essential, including institutions which sustain the rule of law, justice and accountability"[6]. Such activities have been undertaken in areas of central and southern Africa, Central Asia and Central America.

26. Innovative approaches to the promotion of reconciliation need to be further explored. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNHCR has, for example, sought to ensure appropriate linkages between repatriation, reconstruction and reconciliation through the promotion of "open cities", the idea being that favourable consideration for reconstruction assistance is given to communities that demonstrate their willingness to reintegrate returnees from minority groups. In Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda, the Office has also sought to promote the role of women in reconciliation.

27. UNHCR and its multilateral partners need to continue their efforts to better define and concert their respective roles in the range of activities which may be required to promote reconciliation. Activities may include support for the establishment of special tribunals, disarmament and demilitarization, the promotion of indigenous mechanisms for conflict-resolution, and inter-community projects which cut across the lines of conflict. While UNHCR may not be a the main actor in many of these activities, it has a strong interest in their being effectively addressed.

28. In recognition of the natural complementarity between refugee protection and United Nations human rights operations, particularly in the field, UNHCR has been working closely with the High Commissioner for Human Rights in a number of field operations. Similarly, UNHCR's efforts on behalf of refugees can only be enhanced by the active and effective functioning of the International Criminal Tribunals, for example in the Great Lakes region of Africa, where accountability and exclusion remain key considerations.

- How can rehabilitation activities best support the process of reconciliation?

- What is the potential of positive conditionality, such as the "open cities" initiative in the former Yugoslavia, in promoting reconciliation?

- What measures can be taken to promote the effective restoration or establishment of national protection and what are the limits of UNHCR's role in this respect?

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[6] A/AC.96/860, para. 19(i).

RELATED DOCUMENTATION

A. Standing Committee and Executive Committee

1996

EC/46/SC/CRP.16	Follow-Up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56: UNHCR Assistance Activities in Countries of Origin
EC/46/SC/CRP.17	UNHCR's Protection Role in Countries of Origin
EC/46/SC/CRP.31	UNHCR's Role in National Legal and Judicial Capacity-Building
EC/46/SC/CRP.36 and Corr.1	Return of Persons not in need of International Protection
A/AC.96/863	Note on International Protection
A/AC.96/872	Annual Theme: the Pursuit and Implementation of Solutions

1997

EC/47/SC/CRP.7 and Corr.1	Social and Economic Impact of Large Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries
EC/47/SC/CRP.11	Lessons Learnt from the Burundi and Rwanda Emergencies: Conclusions of an Internal Review Process
EC/47/SC/CRP.26[7]	Note on International Protection
EC/47/SC/CRP.27	Progress Report on Informal Consultations on the Provision of International Protection for all who need it
EC/47/SC/CRP.28	Return of persons not in need of International Protection
EC/47/SC/CRP.29	Note on the Exclusion Clauses
EC/47/SC/CRP.30	Note on the Cessation Clauses
A/AC.96/888	Report of the Eighth Meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997)

B. Miscellaneous

Handbook on Voluntary Repatriation

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[7] Reissued to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee as A/AC.96/882.

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Forty-eighth session

REPORT OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE (24 - 26 June 1997)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting was opened by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, His Excellency, Ambassador Ali Mchumo (United Republic of Tanzania), who chaired the meeting through items 1, 2, 3 and 5. His Excellency, Ambassador Bjorn Skogmo (Norway), chaired items 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE EIGHTH MEETING AND THE REPORT OF THE SEVENTH MEETING

2. The *Provisional Annotated Agenda* (EC/47/SC/CRP.25) and the *Draft Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee* (EC/47/SC/CRP.24) were both adopted without amendment.

III. PROTECTION ISSUES

3. Under this item, the Standing Committee had before it seven documents for discussion: *Note on International Protection* (EC/47/SC/CRP.26); *Progress Report on Informal Consultations on the Provision of International Protection for all who need it* (EC/47/SC/CRP.27); *Note on the Cessation Clauses* (EC/47/SC/CRP.30); *Note on the Exclusion Clauses* (EC/47/SC/CRP.29); *Return of Persons not in need of International Protection* (EC/47/SC/CRP.28); *Note on UNHCR and Statelessness Activities* (EC/47/SC/CRP.31); and *UNHCR's Activities for Refugee Law Promotion, Dissemination and Training* (EC/47/SC/CRP.32).

A. Note on International Protection

4. Introducing the *Note on International Protection* (EC/47/SC/CRP.26), the Director of the Division of International Protection explained that this year's Note focused on the institution of asylum, an area which UNHCR considers to be central to any efforts to strengthen the international protection regime. He outlined the essential elements of this regime, referring to admission and *non-refoulement*; access of UNHCR to persons in

GE.97-0272I

need of protection; the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps; the obligations of refugees to respect the laws of the country of asylum; and the security of humanitarian personnel and their access to persons of concern. Further elaborating on this, he stated that the crucial underpinnings of this system are political support and international respect for the rule of law. He outlined some of the current challenges UNHCR has faced when operating in conflict areas and, increasingly, in essentially lawless environments, as exemplified by the Great Lakes. He went on to explain that if UNHCR was to fulfil its mandate, the agreed minimum standards had to receive proper international support, particularly when the security of refugees was in jeopardy, or when refugee camps had to be demilitarized.

5. Most delegations welcomed the theme of asylum as timely. There was strong endorsement of the fact that the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol form the universal basis of the refugee protection regime. It was noted that the general observance of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol by States confirms the soundness of this regime. The importance of States actually implementing their commitments to this regime was underlined.

6. Several elements discussed in the Note were regarded as essential components of the institution of asylum. In particular, delegations emphasized the importance of distinguishing between persons in need of international protection, and those who are not, calling for policies and practices in relation to the separation of armed elements. Particular reference was made, in this connection, to the situation in the Great Lakes region.

7. The issue of whether or not UNHCR can continue to provide protection, or may need to reconsider its involvement, in refugee situations whose civilian nature cannot be guaranteed was raised by several speakers, many of whom underlined the difficulty of identifying criteria for such situations. The importance of safe and unimpeded access by UNHCR to persons in need of protection was reiterated and several delegations paid tribute to UNHCR staff, notably those working in the field and in dangerous conditions. Delegations urged the States concerned to safeguard the physical security of UNHCR and other humanitarian agency staff including local staff. One speaker called on the Executive Committee to assert the obligations of host countries to provide guarantees of security, and others recommended that the Executive Committee follow up on the recent Security Council debate on humanitarian assistance.

8. Many delegations referred to the need for burden-sharing and international cooperation, which they identified as necessary elements for the admission of refugees and for the institution of asylum. One speaker strongly supported the development of a burden-sharing mechanism, initially at the regional level. Attention was again drawn to the situation of countries with large numbers of refugees and limited resources.

9. Several speakers urged States, particularly members of the Executive Committee, to accede to the international refugee protection instruments. Other delegations suggested that emphasis be placed on positive State practice, as well as formal acceptance of legal obligations. Several other delegations highlighted the value of resettlement as an important protection instrument and a durable solution.

10. In response to delegations, the Director thanked them for their constructive comments, especially for their expression of appreciation of and sympathy for UNHCR's field staff working under particularly difficult conditions. He concurred with observations made by some delegations that burden-sharing and international cooperation are fundamental concepts

underlying the international protection framework, and promised to keep this issue at the forefront of the Executive Committee's agenda.

B. Progress Report on Informal Consultations on the Provision of International Protection to all who need it

11. The Chief of UNHCR's General Legal Advice Section introduced EC/47/SC/CRP.27. Many delegations expressed full support for the informal consultative process on the provision of international protection to all in need of it, and strongly encouraged the Office to continue this process. Two delegations expressed interest in joining these consultations.

12. Many speakers commented in detail on the various aspects of temporary protection, including the definition of beneficiaries of temporary protection; its inter-linkage with the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol; the conditions for terminating temporary protection; and the circumstances under which return can take place. It was stressed that the legal basis for international protection is the 1951 Convention and that temporary protection is a complementary tool. Various delegations referred to the need to develop temporary protection in a flexible manner to respond to large scale-influx situations. The importance of burden-sharing was also underlined. The return criteria proposed in the document were described as an interesting basis for benchmarks, although some delegations expressed reservations on the introduction of fixed time-frames in a temporary protection regime. One delegation proposed the establishment of appropriate consultations between UNHCR and the European Union on this matter.

13. Most delegations acknowledged the value of UNHCR's supervisory role and agreed that UNHCR should proceed cautiously in establishing formal measures.

C. Note on the Cessation Clauses

14. The Deputy Director of the Division of International Protection introduced the conference room paper EC/47/SC/CRP.30, which was welcomed by delegations. Speakers expressed agreement with the conclusions put forward in the paper, referring to them as "reasonable barometers". Regarding the period of time which must elapse before "ceased circumstances" can be confirmed, one delegation expressed the view that each situation must be assessed on its own merits. It was also pointed out that the threshold of indicators for "fundamental change" should take into account the socio-economic and infrastructural constraints faced by developing countries. Another delegation emphasized that notwithstanding the application of cessation clauses, refugees should be allowed to present compelling reasons for refusing to avail themselves of the protection of the country of origin.

D. Note on the Exclusion Clauses

15. The Chief, General Legal Advice Section, introduced EC/47/SC/CRP.29. Delegations agreed that the note on the exclusion clauses offered a comprehensive treatment of the subject. While it was recognized that the exclusion clauses should be interpreted within narrow limits, some delegations felt that these limits should not deprive the exclusion clauses of their fundamental purpose to withhold refugee protection to persons who are not entitled to it. The same delegations referred to the interpretation of "seriousness" of non-political crimes, as applied in their respective domestic legal systems. It was noted that a proper application of the exclusion clauses would not extend refugee protection to persons committing acts of terrorism. One delegation pointed out that national mechanisms for applying the exclusion clauses in mass influx situations are often not in place.

E. Return of Persons not in need of International Protection

16. Conference room paper EC/47/SC/CRP.28 was introduced by the Deputy Director of the Division of International Protection. Many delegations agreed that the increasing number of persons found not to be in need of international protection negatively impacts on the credibility of national asylum procedures. The slow rate of return or the non-return of such cases may also obstruct access to international protection for those in need of it. This has already led to the introduction of restrictive measures which may undermine the integrity of the asylum institution.

17. Some delegations suggested that UNHCR's activities in addressing this problem could include the promotion of dialogue between States, taking clear public positions on the acceptability of return of particular cases and the facilitation of "passive monitoring" in countries of origin, as illustrated by UNHCR's activities in Sri Lanka. Other delegations highlighted the exceptional nature of UNHCR's role in this area and noted that UNHCR needs to refrain from involvement in the return of persons where such involvement would be in conflict with its humanitarian mandate. Some delegations also cautioned against UNHCR becoming involved with the return of rejected asylum-seekers, stressing that this fell outside UNHCR's mandate and stating that this issue was primarily a bilateral matter between the States concerned. Other delegations welcomed UNHCR's readiness to confront this issue, and urged UNHCR to continue refining the criteria for its role. UNHCR agreed to continue this discussion with States.

F. Note on UNHCR and Statelessness Activities

18. Conference room paper EC/47/SC/CRP.31 was introduced by a Legal Adviser from UNHCR's General Legal Advice Section. Delegations endorsed the value of UNHCR's activities in this area and asked that such activities be continued. It was proposed that the importance of statelessness issues should be reflected in this year's annual conclusions on international protection. One delegation emphasized that the liberal grant of nationality can address statelessness and help to prevent refugee flows. States were called upon to accede to the international instruments on statelessness, and UNHCR was requested to broaden the scope of its activities to take account of statelessness issues on a more global basis. The Director of the Division of International Protection acknowledged that most of UNHCR activities in this area were in response to States' requests, and appealed to States to provide the additional human and other resources needed to address increased needs for advice and technical cooperation.

G. UNHCR's Activities for Refugee Law Promotion, Dissemination and Training

19. The Chief of UNHCR's Promotion of Refugee Law Section introduced EC/47/SC/CRP.32. Delegations welcomed UNHCR's efforts in disseminating refugee law. They also stressed the need for training in refugee law and related areas and encouraged further efforts in this area. One delegation recommended that UNHCR's promotion and training activities should be linked to enhancing awareness of refugee issues at the local level.

H. Conclusion

20. In his concluding remarks, the Director of the Division of International Protection expressed appreciation for the detailed comments offered by the Standing Committee on the conference room papers, and commended the General Legal Advice Section for the high quality of the papers. He noted that in the course of the debates, several issues of far-reaching importance had been brought into focus. These included the role of

the Executive Committee; the value of its Conclusions on International Protection; the obligation on States to comply with the international instruments for refugee protection; the need for concrete measures to safeguard the physical safety of local and international staff of UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies; and the need to preserve the humanitarian and civilian character of refugee camps. The Director stated that as these issues touched upon operational matters affecting UNHCR's daily work in the field, further guidance on them would be required from the forthcoming plenary session of the Executive Committee.

21. Summing up, the Chairman reiterated the overwhelming acceptance of the various core elements of the institution of asylum, as detailed in the Note, and recalled that all the conference room papers had generally been welcomed and endorsed by the Standing Committee. The Chairman informed delegations that the draft Conclusions on International Protection would be circulated shortly, for discussion at the first round of informal consultations preceding the September meeting of the Standing Committee.

IV. SITUATIONS REPORTS

22. In accordance with the programme of work adopted at the planning meeting of the Standing Committee in January this year, the region of Africa was scheduled for consideration by the Standing Committee. Three regional reviews on Africa were before the Committee; an *Update on Developments in the Southern African Region* (EC/47/SC/CRP.36); an *Update on Regional Developments in Central, East and West Africa* (EC/47/SC/CRP.37); and an *Update on Developments in the Great Lakes Region* (EC/47/SC/CRP.38). In addition, a *Follow-up on the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the CIS Conference* (EC/47/SC/CRP.35) was also before the Standing Committee for consideration.

A. Africa

23. UNHCR's three Directors of Operations in Africa introduced the reports on their respective regions, updating delegations on new developments and projections on future developments.

24. The Assistant High Commissioner also gave a briefing on his recent mission to central Africa, telling delegations that UNHCR is committed to continuing its search for small groups of refugees dispersed throughout the eleven provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Delegations responded favourably to his announcement that the High Commissioner had written to the President of Rwanda suggesting a meeting in Kigali on 7 July 1997 to take stock of the situation of returnees and to plan the gradual reinvolvement of UNDP and the World Bank in meeting the needs of those who have already returned.

25. One delegation urged the international community to pay more attention to addressing the root causes of displacement in Africa and encouraged States to make additional efforts in respect to preventive diplomacy, cautioning against the premature termination of international assistance programmes following major repatriation operations.

26. Following this, delegations expressed concern over developments in the Great Lakes region. Further information was also requested on UNHCR's phase-out plan in Rwanda and it was asked if the plan would be detailed in the *Revised Consolidated Appeal*. Several delegations also expressed support for UNHCR plans to undertake post repatriation activities in Rwanda and requested more information on UNHCR's precise role in the link between relief and development, particularly in the light of the Memorandum of Understanding

recently signed with UNDP. More information was requested on the study of security in camps and on the nature of the proposed camps for Burundian refugees in Democratic Republic of the Congo. Delegations also urged UNHCR to draw up plans to assure the exclusively civilian character of camps and indicated that the elaboration of a regional protection strategy for the Great Lakes region would be welcomed.

27. Delegations paid tribute to the courage of UNHCR field officers working in difficult and often dangerous circumstances, while at the same time expressing concern over the safety of humanitarian workers and called on States to assure their security and safe access to refugees. Many delegations expressed shock and dismay over the killing of a UNHCR staff member, his wife and children the previous week in Rwanda. This resulted in a request from the Chairman that an official expression of condolences on behalf of the entire Executive Committee be conveyed to the relatives of the victims.

28. With regard to UNHCR operations in the Southern Africa region, one delegation noted that it is laudable that UNHCR continues to promote repatriation in Angola, but suggested that UNHCR scale back expectations, given the slow implementation of the Lusaka Accords, and present a more modest budget for 1997.

29. In respect to UNHCR operations in the Horn of Africa, several delegations voiced concern over expulsion of UNHCR staff from Eritrea and requested further information on this situation. Concern was expressed in relation to the sharp fall in assistance budget for refugees in the Sudan and it was noted that the return of Eritrean refugee can be accomplished only with an agreement from Eritrean Government. Progress on repatriation in north western Somalia was also encouraged, with one delegation urging the acceleration of the pace for closing camps in Ethiopia.

30. Commenting on UNHCR operations in West Africa, one delegation asked that Liberians be encouraged to return, but recommended that their safety not be compromised by undue haste to meet the election deadline. Other delegations stressed that more priority should be given to unaccompanied minors and the protection of child soldiers in West Africa. Delegations also encouraged continued UNHCR initiatives to strengthen ties with ECOWAS and the OAU.

31. In more general comments, delegations indicated that they would like to have more transparency on lessons learnt and internal inspection reports. One delegation requested that future situation reports include the past year's expenditures for each programme, including information on size of the caseload and linkages between allocations and tasks undertaken. Another delegation urged broader use of Quick Implementation Projects (QIPs) to consolidate reconciliation following repatriation movements.

B. Follow-up to CIS Conference

32. The report on follow-up to the CIS Conference was introduced by UNHCR's Director for Europe Operations. In his introduction, the Director provided updated information on UNHCR's activities in respect to the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference and indicated that more detailed information would be provided at the meeting of the Steering Committee on 2 July 1997.

33. Delegations generally refrained from engaging in detailed discussions, stating that more extensive comments would be reserved for the 2 July 1997 meeting of the Steering Committee, while stating that the scheduling of this Steering Committee meeting was welcomed.

34. One delegation reiterated that the CIS Plan of Action remained a top priority on its agenda, contrary to what is stated paragraph 3 of the paper, and noted that this priority had been made known in various fora. Further, the same delegation stressed that the Plan of Action was not a long-term plan, but rather was a comprehensive solution to be completed by the year 2000. More information and details on the special fund for Baltic States were also requested.

35. Other delegations noted their support of UNHCR's increasing role in Tajikistan and generally urged broad support for the implementation of the Plan of Action, encouraging UNHCR to continue coordinating closely with IOM. Delegations also expressed specific interest in the follow-up to prevention aspects of the Plan of Action. Several delegations indicated they would announce pledges at the 2 July 1997 Steering Committee meeting. Delegations also mentioned that the recent donor mission to the Caucasus region was most helpful.

36. One delegation questioned UNHCR's role in respect to categories of persons identified within the CIS Plan of Action in relation to UNHCR's broader protection role, recommending that UNHCR should avoid a "quick-fix" solution, in this regard.

C. Statements on Hong Kong

37. A special request was made by one delegation to make a statement on the situation in Hong Kong. This delegation expressed concern about the remaining boat people from Viet Nam in Hong Kong, but commended UNHCR on it's efforts to seek solutions to this problem.

38. Another delegation then took the floor and expressed formal thanks to UNHCR for the exceptional help and cooperation in addressing this problem since the mid-1970's, including the continuation of assistance after the closure of the Comprehensive Plan of Action. The delegation also noted that of the over 200,000 boat people passing through Hong Kong, 99 per cent have found a durable solution, largely thanks to UNHCR.

V. PROGRAMME AND FUNDING ISSUES

39. The Standing Committee had before it a document entitled, *Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1997 and Tentative Estimates for the 1998 General Programmes Target* (EC/47/SC/CRP.34) and a related draft decision.

40. The agenda item was introduced by the Director of the Division of Operational Support. With regard to 1997 expenditure, he noted that there was no proposed revision to the already approved General Programmes target. He also provided up-to-date information on the use of the Voluntary Repatriation Fund, the Emergency Fund and the Programme Reserve. This information was made available in written form. In respect to 1997 Special Programmes, he alluded to funding difficulties for a number of programmes. In relation to 1998 General Programmes, he noted that the tentative estimate, as determined by the Operations Review Board, was $ 440 million. He explained why UNHCR felt it was necessary to reduce the target in comparison to that of 1997. In proposing a General Programmes target, UNHCR felt that it was of critical importance that a target be set which was fundable. He also gave an update on developments in relation to the likely allocation for UNHCR under the Regular Budget for the biennium 1998 and 1999.

41. The current funding trends were reviewed by the Head of the Funding and Donor Relations Service. He prefaced his remarks by noting the invaluable contribution of asylum countries, often with limited resources, in providing

international protection. He also noted that, as at 23 June 1997, total contributions to UNHCR (under both General and Special Programmes) amounted to $ 482 million, stating that his was comparable to the level of contributions at the same date in 1996. He nevertheless expressed serious concern about the prospects for the full funding of General Programmes in 1997 and 1998. The Head of the Service went on to highlight serious funding problems under some of UNHCR's Special Programmes, especially for the former Yugoslavia, the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and various voluntary repatriation programmes in Africa. He concluded by appealing to donors for their support.

42. Delegations made statements and posed questions on particular operations and issues. One delegation underlined the need for prudence in managing the funding under the 1998 General Programmes and the importance of balancing expenditure against likely income.

43. The Standing Committee adopted an amended version of the related Decision on Programme and Funding (annex). The amendment drew attention to the need for equitable burden sharing.

VI. REPORTS RELATING TO OVERSIGHT: INTERNATIONAL PROCUREMENT

44. Introducing the conference room paper on international procurement (EC/47/SC/CRP.33), the Chief of UNHCR's Supply and Transport Section (STS) focused on three issues: the justification for international procurement; the procurement methods used; and the concerns expressed by the external auditors. As of 1998, more than 50 per cent of all international procurement (in terms of value) is based on open international competition. UNHCR strives to achieve the widest possible geographical basis for purchases based on open international competition. In two areas of concern highlighted by the external auditors, namely annual purchasing plans and receiving reports, UNHCR is making a concerted effort to address these concerns. It is expected that the introduction of the "ideal supply chain" will go a long way in addressing these concerns.

45. Delegations voiced support for the progress made in the past year in achieving greater transparency in international procurement. Support was also voiced on the efforts to rationalize the supply chain. In particular, strong support was given to the ideal supply chain project and the other proposed changes outlined in the conference room paper. Delegations also expressed a desire to see greater details in future reports on the scope of regional and local procurement by UNHCR and implementing partners, as well as in-kind donations. Concern was expressed by some delegations that the current UNHCR bidding procedures seemed to be tilted in favour of current suppliers that were predominately from developed countries. Two delegations suggested various ways that developing country suppliers could be supported. Another delegation, however, complimented UNHCR for having successfully engineered a careful road between the various interest blocks on the subject of geographical distribution of purchases. One delegation requested to know the reasons why the emergency warehouses in Turkey and Dubai were closed down. A number of delegations requested clarification of the principle of "under-utilized major donor country" and the extent to which they were accorded a preference.

VII. GOVERNANCE ISSUES

46. Two issues were before the Standing Committee under this agenda item; final consideration of the Annual Theme for the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee; and a *Report on the Informal Consultations on Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Observer Participation in the Work of the*

Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme and its Standing Committee (EC/47/SC/CRP.39).

47. A draft decision on the Annual Theme was circulated in the room and proposed that the topic of debate at the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee in October 1997 focus on "repatriation challenges". Several alternative proposals were put forward by delegations. The decision on the theme of "repatriation challenges", was adopted with amendments (annex).

48. Delegations then considered the report on the informal consultations on NGO observer participation and the draft decision contained in the report. One delegation noted that, as proposed, the modalities for observer participation allowed by the recommendations of the informal consultations would create an anomaly in comparison with stricter requirements applied to observer States. The delegation asked if the Secretary could suggest a way that this could be addressed. In response the Secretary suggested that it might be sufficient for the plenary to delegate to the Standing Committee the authority to admit new government observers in the course of the year. The decision was adopted without revision (annex).

VIII. MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

49. The Deputy High Commissioner gave an oral update on Project Delphi. Commenting on this update, one delegation recommended selective use of outside sources of expertise when in-house sources were not available and another delegation suggested that UNHCR should redeploy staff where projects are declining or closing.

IX. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

50. The Secretary informed delegations that an evaluation of coordination in the Great Lakes region was going ahead and that the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) is now preparing terms of reference for the evaluation. Interested delegations will be kept informed of further developments.

51. In addition, the Secretary informed delegations that drafting will begin now on the conclusion on protection. The first written draft will be circulated to delegations before the first round of informal consultations scheduled for 8 September 1997. Arrangements will be made by the Rapporteur, assisted by the Secretariat, for additional rounds of consultations on the preparation of decisions and conclusions to be presented to the plenary. One later round of consultations is already scheduled for 10 October 1997.

52. There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting.

DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE

I. DECISION ON PROGRAMME AND FUNDING PROJECTIONS

The Standing Committee,

Recalling the decision of the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee on programme, funding and administrative matters,

(a) Notes that the overall revised needs for 1997 (excluding the Regular Budget) are currently estimated at some $ 1.2 billion, of which projected needs for General Programmes remain at $ 452.6 million, as approved by the Executive Committee at its forty-seventh session, and those for Special Programmes are $ 745.4 million;

(b) Notes also the tentative budget estimates of $ 440 million for 1998 General Programmes as set out in document EC/47/SC/CRP.34, which includes a Programme Reserve of 10 per cent of programmed activities;

(c) Further notes the current level of contributions to UNHCR's programmes and acknowledges the appeal of the High Commissioner to donor Governments for further announcements of contributions, in a spirit of equitable burden-sharing, so as to permit continuation and timely implementation of the various assistance programmes;

(d) Notes the recent developments in relation to UNHCR's share of the United Nations Regular Budget and requests the High Commissioner to continue discussions with the Secretary-General on the level and form of the contribution from the Regular Budget.

II. DECISION ON THE ANNUAL THEME OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Standing Committee,

Recalling the decision taken at the forty-sixth session of the Executive Committee that the General Debate will be discontinued and replaced by a debate on a focused annual theme to be selected in consultation with the High Commissioner and the Standing Committee at a meeting held at least three months before the annual plenary session (A/AC.96/860, para. 32(h)),

(a) Decides that the annual theme to be discussed at the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee will be "Repatriation Challenges";

(b) Considers that the debate on the annual theme should be conducted, *inter alia*, on the basis of relevant work undertaken at the inter-sessional meetings of the Standing Committee, notably in respect of the Note on International Protection, as well as of other documents related to protection aspects of repatriation and return;

(c) Requests the High Commissioner to submit to the plenary session appropriate background documentation to provide a broad framework for the debate.

III. DECISION ON NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION (NGO) OBSERVER PARTICIPATION IN THE WORK OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME AND ITS STANDING COMMITTEE

The Standing Committee,

Recalling the decision of the Executive Committee at its forty-seventh session to initiate consultations amongst Executive Committee members on the participation of NGO observers in the work of the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee (A/AC.96/878, para 26 (c)), and having considered the recommendations of the informal consultations on NGO observer participation in the work of the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee (EC/47/SC/CRP.39),

(a) Emphasizes the Executive Committee and Standing Committee's role of providing governance to UNHCR; in this context, stresses the importance of maintaining the inter-governmental character of their decision-making processes, their well established tradition of work by consensus, and the efficiency of their working methods;

(b) Recognizes the contribution of NGOs as important partners in UNHCR's humanitarian work on behalf of refugees;

(c) Recalls existing arrangements in the Executive Committee plenary whereby NGOs having consultative status with ECOSOC or which are members of ICVA are permitted to make written contributions in accordance with the Rules of Procedure; also recalls that, in accordance with established tradition, the same NGOs are permitted access to the Conference room and to deliver one oral statement to the Committee;

(d) Emphasizes the need to maintain the tradition of the Standing Committee in respect to the confidentiality of statements by individual delegations;

(e) Recognizes the legitimate wish of NGOs to have enhanced access as observers to Executive Committee and Standing Committee meetings, as well as their capacity to enrich discussion within areas of their expertise;

(f) Welcomes the establishment by the NGO community of an open-ended reference group amongst NGOs currently invited to the Executive Committee plenary sessions and which are interested in closer involvement with the work of the Executive Committee and Standing Committee, including NGOs from developing countries;

(g) Decides that:

(i) NGOs registered at the plenary will also be invited to Standing Committee meetings upon written request from individual NGOs concerned, and calls on UNHCR and the NGO community explore appropriate mechanisms to ensure participation by NGOs from developing countries, notably their PARinAC regional focal points;

(ii) One NGO observer statement will be heard on each Standing Committee agenda item, with the selection of the organization to speak to be made by the NGOs themselves on the basis of expertise or direct knowledge of the matter under consideration;

(iii) Standing Committee documents will be available upon request to NGOs through their established networks, prior to Standing Committee meetings;

(iv) NGOs will be permitted to make written contributions on the subjects under debate, provided that these do not have budgetary consequences for the UNHCR Secretariat and that NGOs concerned make provision for their production and circulation;

(v) The Executive Committee or its Standing Committee reserve the right exceptionally to declare any Standing Committee meeting or agenda item closed to observer participation: and that such decisions will be taken by consensus following a request by any delegation or group of delegations to the Chairman who will consult with Executive Committee members;

(vi) Informal consultations on decisions and conclusions will be limited to Executive Committee members, in accordance with established practice;

(h) Further decides that these arrangements will be introduced after the forty-eighth Executive Committee plenary session in October 1997 and will be reviewed after a trial period of one year.

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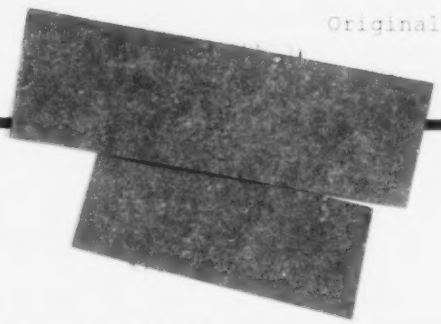

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Forty-eighth session

ACTION TAKEN ON DECISIONS OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This document provides, in summary form, information on the follow-up by UNHCR on all decisions/conclusions of the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee that called for specific action to be taken by the High Commissioner. The sections and paragraphs referred to below correspond to those contained in the report of the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee (A/AC.96/878). Decisions or conclusions requiring action by Governments or other entities, rather than the High Commissioner, are not reported on. To the maximum extent, Executive Committee and Standing Committee documents have been cross-referenced in order to limit the length of the report.

II. ACTION TAKEN

para. 21: General Conclusion on International Protection

(h) Recognizes that countries of asylum carry a heavy burden, including in particular developing countries with limited resources and those which, due to their location, host large numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers; reiterates in this regard its commitment to uphold the principles of international solidarity and burden-sharing and calls on Governments and UNHCR to continue to respond to the assistance needs of refugees until durable solutions are found;

UNHCR action. See: *Social and Economic Impact of Large Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries* (EC/47/SC/CRP.7), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997).

GE.97-02980

(m) Recalls its conclusion 77 (XLVI), which encouraged the High Commissioner to engage in consultations and discussions concerning measures to ensure international protection to all who need it and called on UNHCR to organize informal consultations on this subject; supports UNHCR's activities to date in respect of such consultations and discussions, and encourages UNHCR to continue this process, keeping the Executive Committee informed;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress Report on Informal Consultations on the Provision of International Protection for all who need it* (EC/47/SC/CRP.27), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

(n) Notes with satisfaction UNHCR's activities with regard to the promotion and dissemination of refugee law and protection principles and calls upon the High Commissioner to continue to expand and strengthen the promotion and training activities of the Office, including in the area of prevention and reduction of statelessness and related nationality issues, with the active support of States and through increased cooperation with other international organizations, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and other relevant organizations;

UNHCR action. See: *UNHCR's Activities for Refugee Law Promotion, Dissemination and Training* (EC/47/SC/CRP.32), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

(o) Recalls its request that UNHCR support and promote efforts by States towards the development and implementation of criteria and guidelines on responses to persecution specifically aimed at women, welcomes in this context the convening by UNHCR in February 1996 of the Symposium on Gender-Based Persecution, the purpose of which was to share information on States' initiatives in this respect, and encourages UNHCR to continue and strengthen its efforts for the protection of women having a well-founded fear of persecution; and calls on States to adopt an approach that is sensitive to gender-related concerns and which ensures that women whose claims to refugee status are based upon a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons enumerated in the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol, including persecution through sexual violence or other gender-related persecution, are recognized as refugees;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress Report on Refugee Women and UNHCR's Framework for Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action* (EC/47/SC/CRP.45), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997), and all regional updates.

(t) Encourages the regular exchange of information as part of the ongoing consultations of UNHCR with Governments and NGOs on resettlement;

UNHCR action. See: *Information Note on UNHCR's Resettlement Handbook* (EC/47/SC/CRP.47), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997).

(v) Encourages UNHCR in this context, in cooperation with other appropriate international organizations, to continue the consultative process initiated in 1995 on the question of how the return process can be facilitated;

UNHCR action. See: *Note on International Protection* (EC/47/SC/CRP.26) and *Return of persons not in need of International Protection* (EC/47/SC/CRP.28), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

(w) Recalling the inter-relationship between protection and solutions, as well as the desirability of prevention, including through the respect for human rights and the implementation of relevant instruments and standards, with particular attention to the responsibilities of States to resolve refugee situations and, especially with respect to countries of origin, to eliminate causes of refugee flows, calls on UNHCR to continue its activities in support of national legal and judicial capacity-building where appropriate, and to cooperate with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other relevant organizations in this regard.

UNHCR action. See: *Note on International Protection* (EC/47/SC/CRP.26) and *UNHCR's Activities for Refugee Law Promotion, Dissemination and Training* (EC/47/SC/CRP.32), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

para. 22: Comprehensive and Regional Approaches within a Protection Framework

(f) Invites UNHCR to provide its support and expertise in formulating comprehensive approaches and assisting States in exploring more systematically where and how such approaches might be appropriate and feasible.

UNHCR action. See: *Update on Regional Developments in Central Asia, South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East* (EC/47/SC/CRP.6), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997), and *Update on Developments in the Southern African Region* (EC/47/SC/CRP.36), presented at the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

para. 23: Conclusion on the CIS Conference

(n) Calls on the High Commissioner to continue to cooperate with IOM and OSCE in coordinating ongoing and future activities in the countries of the CIS and in steering and monitoring progress through appropriate follow-up mechanisms;

(o) Requests the High Commissioner to keep the Executive Committee informed of measures taken and proposed, and of progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

UNHCR action. See: *Follow-up on the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the CIS Conference* (EC/47/SC/CRP.35), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

para. 24: Conclusion on the Implementation of ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56

(b) Calls on UNHCR to continue its efforts to ensure the full effectiveness of its emergency preparedness and response mechanisms, and urges the Office, in its relations with other intergovernmental and non-governmental agencies, to continue to pursue the development of common standards and practices for responding to emergencies;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997), and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(d) Calls on UNHCR to continue to participate actively in the IASC as the primary mechanism for inter-agency decisions on system-wide policy issues relating to humanitarian assistance, for formulating a coherent and timely response to major disasters and complex emergencies, as well as for inter-agency decisions of an operational nature, and urges the Office to play its part in ensuring that the IASC fully develops its foreseen institutional role;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997), and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(e) Urges UNHCR to work within the IASC to examine as a matter of priority options and proposals (a) to improve the functioning of the IASC and its Working Group, (b) to strengthen the IASC's role in reaching decisions and providing inter-agency guidance to the United Nations system, and (c) to increase the effectiveness of the IASC Secretariat, including, *inter alia*, through increasing IASC members' support for and involvement in preparations for IASC meetings; and stresses the importance of recommendations to these ends being included in the Secretary-General's report to the 1997 substantive session of ECOSOC;

UNHCR action. See: *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/1997/17) and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(f) Calls also on UNHCR to participate actively in the efforts of the IASC to undertake a systematic analysis of various models of coordination, with a view to ascertaining their comparative effectiveness in responding to different situations;

UNHCR action. See: *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/1997/17) and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(g) Underscores the importance of establishing Memoranda of Understanding with intergovernmental agencies, including at the level of field operations, as a mechanism to ensure that operations are effective, complementary and predictable; welcomes the recent conclusion of Memoranda of Understanding between UNHCR, UNICEF and UNFPA; urges UNHCR to continue its efforts to establish predictable operational relationships through the conclusion or enhancement of Memoranda of Understanding and other agreements with relevant partners, notably UNDP and WHO; and calls on the High Commissioner to report to the Standing Committee on lessons learnt from such inter-agency agreements;

UNHCR action. See: *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/1997/17), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC, and *Memoranda of Understanding* (EC/47/SC/CRP.51), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997).

(h) Calls on UNHCR to continue its active participation in the consolidated appeals process, urges the Office to support efforts to ensure that consolidated appeals reflect priorities established through joint needs assessments and strategic planning and are effectively coordinated with other resources mobilization efforts, including Round Tables and Consultative Group mechanisms, and stresses the importance to UNHCR of the timely issue of appeals, their alignment with the calendar year and their responsiveness to the regional dimensions of complex emergencies;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997), *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/1997/17), and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(i) Urges UNHCR to continue to work with the IASC to develop ways of implementing effective and predictable linkages between humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and development in countries of origin and to analyse lessons learnt in this regard;

UNHCR action. See: *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/1997/17) and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC, and *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997).

(m) Calls on UNHCR to continue to participate in efforts, coordinated by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, to ensure that humanitarian agencies have access to early information regarding potential flows of refugees and displaced persons;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997), and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(n) Calls also on UNHCR to continue to collaborate actively with the IASC in its efforts to establish an effective and predictable division of labour in respect of internally displaced persons;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997); *Draft Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee* (EC/47/SC/CRP.14), presented to the seventh meeting of the Standing Committee (April-May 1997); and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(r) Recognizes that initiatives to address and resolve the problem of statelessness have an important role to play in the prevention of refugee movements and calls on UNHCR to continue its efforts in this respect;

UNHCR action. See: *Note on UNHCR and Statelessness Activities* (EC/47/SC/CRP.31), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

(t) Calls on UNHCR, in coordination with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, to report to the January meeting of the Standing Committee on progress made in the inter-agency consultations on the formulation of a comprehensive set of proposals, recommendations and options for submission to the substantive session of ECOSOC in 1997.

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

para. 25: General Decision on Programme, Administrative and Financial Matters

(b) Requests the High Commissioner, within the resources available, to respond flexibly and efficiently to the needs currently indicated under 1997 General and Special Programmes which are tentatively estimated at $ 1.1 billion, and to any other new needs that might arise, bearing in mind the Statute of the Office and the priority to be accorded to statutory activities, and the relevant provisions of the Financial Rules for Voluntary Funds;

UNHCR action. See: *Overall Programme and Funding Projections for 1996 and 1997* (EC/47/SC/CRP.5), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee; *Draft Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee* (EC/47/SC/CRP.14), *Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1997* (EC/47/SC/CRP.16), presented to the seventh meeting of the Standing Committee (April-May 1997); *Draft Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee* (EC/47/SC/CRP.24) and *Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1997 and Tentative estimates for the 1998 General Programmes Target* (EC/47/SC/CRP.34), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997); *Draft Report of the Eighth Meeting of the Standing Committee (24-26 June 1997)* (EC/47/SC/CRP.40), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997); and *Overview of UNHCR Activities* -

1996-1998 (A/AC.96/884), presented to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (October 1997).

UNHCR action. See: *Internal Audit* (EC/47/SC/CRP.10), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997: *Follow-up to Audit Recommendations on Programme and Financial Issues and the Integrated Management Information System* (EC/47/SC/CRP.20), presented to the seventh meeting of the Standing Committee (April-May 1997); *Update on International Procurement* (EC/47/SC/CRP.33), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997); and *Implementing Partners* (EC/47/SC/CRP.48), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997).

UNHCR action. See: *Implementing Partners* (EC/47/SC/CRP.48), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997), and *Measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations of the Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 1996* (A/AC.96/885/Add.1), presented to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (October 1997).

UNHCR action. See: *Internal Audit* (EC/47/SC/CRP.10), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997).

UNHCR action. See: *Montbrillant Building: Rental Costs* (EC/47/SC/CRP.1), presented to the fifth meeting of the Standing Committee (December 1996).

para. 26: Decision on Executive Committee Working Methods

(b) Also decides that the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee should be revised to reflect these changes in accordance with the proposals put forward in document A/AC.96/868, annex II;

UNHCR action. See: ***Revised Rules of Procedure*** **(A/AC.96/187/Rev.5).**

(c) Further decides to initiate consultations among Executive Committee members on the participation of NGO observers in the work of the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee, bearing in mind revised arrangements for NGO consultation with ECOSOC and further discussions to take place at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly;

UNHCR action. See: ***Progress Report on the Informal Consultations on Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Observer Participation in the Work of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme and its Standing Committee*** (EC/47/SC/CRP.21), presented to the seventh meeting of the Standing Committee (April-May 1997) and ***Report on the Informal Consultations on Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Observer Participation in the Work of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme and its Standing Committee*** (EC/47/SC/CRP.39), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

para. 27: Decision on the Work Programme of the Standing Committee in 1997

(c) Calls on the Standing Committee to report on its work to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee.

UNHCR action. See: ***Report on the Work of the Standing Committee*** (A/AC.96/893), submitted to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee (October 1997).

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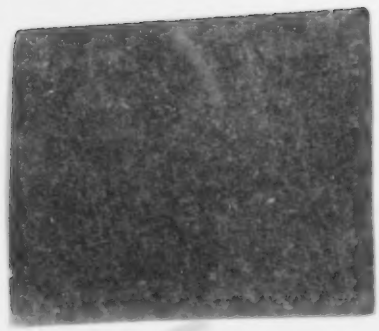
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Forty-eighth session

PROVISIONAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS
ISSUED AT THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Pre-session

A/AC.96/XLVIII/L.1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
A/AC.96/880	Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee
A/AC.96/881	Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee
A/AC.96/882	Note on International Protection
A/AC.96/883 and Corr.1 (English only)	Voluntary Funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: Accounts for the year 1996
A/AC.96/884	Overview of UNHCR Activities - 1996-1998
Add.1	Expenditure, Budgets and Post Requirements (Countries/Areas, Other Programmes and Headquarters)
Add.2	Update on UNHCR Programme and Funding Projections for 1997 and 1998
Add.3	Report of the ACABQ
Add.4	Contributions to UNHCR for 1997



GE.97-02828

A/AC.96/885	Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the Period ended 31 December 1996
Add.1	Measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors
A/AC.96/886	UNHCR Inspection and Evaluation Activities
A/AC.96/887	Annual Theme: Repatriation challenges
A/AC.96/888	Report of the Eighth Meeting of the Standing Committee
A/AC.96/889	Action taken on Decisions of the Forty-Seventh Session of the Executive Committee
A/AC.96/890	Provisional List of Documents issued at the Forty-Eight session*

In-session

A/AC.96/891	Provisional List of Participants*
A/AC.96/892	Agenda
A/AC.96/893	Report on the Work of the Standing Committee
A/AC.96/894	Report of the Ninth Meeting of the Standing Committee

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
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Forty-eighth session

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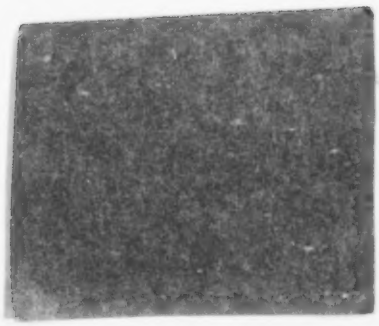

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A/AC.96/894	Report of the Ninth Meeting of the Standing Committee
A/AC.96/895	Report of the Forty-Eighth Session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme

Summary Records

A/AC.96/SR.516-524	Summary Records of the Forty-Eighth Session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme

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